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*Deccan Parallels to the Burj-Namah.* — By Dr. VICCAJI  
DINSHAW, Mahaboobnagar, India.

Recently Dr. Louis H. Gray very kindly sent me a reprint from this Journal (Vol. 33, pp. 281-294), in which the section on Parsi-Persian omen calendars interested me very greatly, because in it I saw a very close parallel to the stanzas consulted by the Muhammadans here in the Deccan, when they see the new moon. On comparing these with the Burj-Namah, I find that out of the twelve omens mentioned in these Deccan stanzas about eight agree with those of the Burj-Namah. I will, however, first quote these Deccan stanzas, and show their parallelism.

ماه محرم زر بهیمن — اندر صفر آینه  
ماه ربیع آب روان — آخر غنم ای مه نگر  
ماه جمادی نقره بهیمن — پیری بهیمن در آخرین  
ماه رجب مصحف بهیمن — شعبان گیاه سبزتر  
شمشیر در رمضان نگر — شوال جامه سبزتر  
دلچسده بینی کودکی — دلچسجه دختر خوب تر

TRANSLATION.

(In the) month (of) Muharram look on gold, in Šafar look on a mirror,

(In) the (first) Rabi' look on the running waters, in the last (Rabi') look on a lamb, oh! thou the moon-faced!<sup>1</sup>

(In) the first Jumāda look on silver, look on an old man in the last (i. e. the second Jumāda).

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<sup>1</sup> If in this line we read ماه for مه, we may translate, 'in the last Rabi' month, o (friend) look on a lamb'.

In Rajab look on the Koran, (in) Sha'bān look on the green (lit. greener) grass.

Look on the scimitar in Ramadān, in Shawwāl look on a green (lit. greener) robe.

(In) Dhu-l-Ka'da look on a young lad, (in) Dhu-l-Hijja (look on) a fair maid (lit. a fairer daughter).

### PARALLELISM.

جمادى الثانى — پير = جوزا — پير  
 ربيع الاول — آبروان = خرجنگ — آبروان  
 صفر — آينه = ميزان — آينه  
 محرم — زر = ميزان — زر  
 جمادى الاول — نقره = قوس — سيم  
 ذلقعدة — بينى كودكى = دلو — مبین كودكى  
 رجب — مصحف } = جدى — اشيم وهو  
 دلو ايننا اهوويريو }  
 شعبان — سبزه = خرجنگ — سبزه

These stanzas are believed in, and acted upon, by the Muhammadans of Persian descent and by pure Persians; other Muhammadans, such as the Arabs and the descendants of the Turks, who are also plentiful here, neither believe in them nor go by them; indeed, some of the latter think it against Islam to do so. It is true that the Hindus, too, have a superstition as to what articles or things are auspicious to look upon after seeing the new moon, but these are quite different to the Burj-Namah and the Deccan stanzas, and do not vary month by month as in them.

These facts show that the Burj-Namah has not originated from India, and that the Deccan stanzas have followed the Burj-Namah. Moreover, one cannot but feel convinced that Gray is right when he says that these Parsi-Persian calendar omens were incorporated into Zoroastrianism from the Babylonians. To my mind these omens were believed in by the Zoroastrians at the time of the Arab conquest; these and other superstitions formed part and parcel of their lives and were so firmly rooted in their hearts that even Muhammadanism was not able to eradicate them; the beliefs were cherished by the Persians

even after they had left the faith of their ancestors and had adopted that of Islam. On the other hand, the Arabs of that time never cared for them at all, being directly trained by their Prophet to believe in but One Power guiding the destiny of men. Again, the early history of the rise of Islam does not produce any proofs of the prevalence of any such superstitions; there was then only cheerful obedience to the will of Allāh. It is only after the conquest of Persia by the Arabs that we see these superstitions, because, as is well known, the Persians adopted the faith of Islam only outwardly, and in their heart of hearts they ever cherished a tender regard for the religion and customs of their ancestors.

The strongest proof, to my mind, is that had these beliefs been prevalent amongst the Arabs before the conquest of Persia, the present-day Arabs ought to have it still with them (which, as I have said above, is not the case); it is the exclusive belief of the Persian-Muhammadans or their descendants in the Deccan.

As I have said in my book, *The Date and Country of Zarathushtra* (Hyderabad, 1912), it is not the Semites alone (Babylonians) who tried to influence the Iranian mind. Long before the advent of the Semites one branch of the Iranians whom I have styled the Kyanians and who separated early from their brethren, the Medo-Persians, had arrived at the lands round about Urumiah and Van, by quite a separate route, ages before the other two. This branch lived in these parts, struggling with the inhabitants, the Hittites and the Sumero-Accadians, whom the Iranians included under the common appellation of "Turanians" because of a similar form of faith. Traces of this struggle are plentiful in the Yashts; a history unfortunately believed to be legendary, but which, I hope, will prove to be true if further excavations are carried out by experts round about Takht-i-Sulaiman, which was the rallying point, or rather, the haven of refuge for the kings of Iran in times of trouble and when hotly pursued by enemies.

Leaving aside the history of the Yashts, we find vivid earlier pictures of this struggle in the Gathas of Zarathushtra, because, as I have said in my book already mentioned, the deities of the Sumero-Accadians (Ishmu and Akkimu) are found under an evil aspect in the Gathas as Aēshma and Akoman; and

the only form of worship at this period — the worship of the evil spirits alone<sup>1</sup> (with the object of keeping them in good humor) — is vehemently denounced by Zarathushtra because he saw some of his tribes (the Kavis, Karpans, and the Usigs) adopting through fear this worship.

In conclusion, I would draw attention to the fact that this part of India (Deccan) is now what western Asia was in ancient times, a congery of nations, who have in most cases preserved the traditions of their ancestors intact. This region is, therefore, peculiarly important for tracing the origin of ancient traditions, etc., and I shall be only too glad to help scholars who may be in doubt as to the origin of any such.

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<sup>1</sup> I say *alone*, because the Sumero-Accadians know nothing about the Benign Spirit or Spirits, this latter conception having originated with the Semites and Aryans.